

From the Author

Edw. 1798. 4459/5

A
S E R M O N,
PREACHED AT THE CATHEDRAL,
N O R W I C H,

On FRIDAY, April 19, 1793.

*** The Profits arising from this publication will be given to the Governors of the Charity for the Relief of poor Widows and Children of Clergymen, beneficed or having Curacies in Norfolk or Norwich.*

NORWICH. *At a full Court of Mayoralty held the
first Day of May, 1793.*

ORDERED,

*THAT the Thanks of this Court be given
to the Reverend Mr. POTTER for the Sermon by him
preached before this Corporation in the Cathedral on the
late Fast Day; and that he be requested to print and pub-
lish the same.*



ORDERED,

*THAT the Town Clerk do wait on Mr.
Potter with the above Thanks and Request.*

By the Court,

DE HAGUE.

A

S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE THE

Right Worshipful the Mayor of Norwich,

AND THE

CORPORATION,

In the CATHEDRAL, on FRIDAY, April 19, 1793,

BEING THE DAY APPOINTED TO BE OBSERVED AS A

GENERAL FAST.

By the Rev. ROBERT POTTER, A. M.
PREBENDARY OF NORWICH.

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CHURCH-YARD, LONDON.

M DCC XCIII.

p/64



SERMON

ON

THE GENERAL FAST.

1 PETER II. 17.

"Fear God. Honour the King."

THE three great Sages of antiquity, who entertained the sublimest conceptions of the Supreme Being and his moral Attributes, and made the deepest researches into the human mind, the patient Job, the holy David, and the heaven-instructed Solomon, terminated their religious enquiries with the same

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conclusion,

conclusion, and expressed it almost in the same words, "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." *Job. XXVIII, 28. Ps. CXI. 10. Prov. I. 7. and IX. 10.*

In opposition to this just sentiment, to every dictate of reason, and to every feeling of the human heart, the Philosophy of modern Free-thinkers represents this fear of God as "weak, irrational, servile, and unmanly; as working wonders perhaps among the vulgar, by acting upon the mere simplicity of babes and sucklings; but as unworthy of the liberal, refined, and polished part of mankind, who look upon the pious narrations of future rewards and punishments as no better than childrens' tales, or the amusements of the mere vulgar." *Characteristics, vol. III. p. 177.*

This fine theory, under the pretence of emancipating the human mind from the gloomy vassalage of
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of superstitious dread, dissolves the obligation of all morality, by destroying the vital principle of all Religion, which has its foundation in the fear of God: indeed in the room of this it has graciously substituted a taste, an impression of the decorum and grace of actions, the harmony and numbers of the heart, and the beauty of the affections: these indeed are splendid words, and make a figure amidst the futility of modern Platonism; but they have no substance, no foundation, no sanction, no power.

Our wise and pious fathers saw the malignant tendency of this loose principle, and opposed it with strong and convincing arguments drawn from the sacred armoury of divine truth: the specious fallacy was exposed in all its deformity, and sunk, we hoped for ever, in contempt and infamy. But infidelity was then only in its non-age; it is now arrived at its full maturity, erects its hideous front with more daring insolence, denies the very Being of the Creator

tor and Governor of the world, deifies its own unhallowed Reason, and attempts to place it in the throne of the Almighty. Such ever is the progressive growth of impiety; "out of the Serpent's root comes forth a Cockatrice, and his fruit is a fiery flying Dragon." *Isai.* XIV. 29.

But it is not in the nature of things that the mischief should stop here. Religion and civil Government are so closely connected, their intercourse of good offices mutually assisting each other, and their united influence co-operating for the welfare of mankind, that the same irreligious spirit which strives to abolish the one, has the same malignant tendency to subvert the other; or, in more appropriated language, the same evil heart of unbelief, which prompts men to depart from the living God, prompts them to reject the authority of the King. Well therefore has St. Peter joined these two precepts together, "Fear God, Honour the King," as
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all the blessings of religion and social happiness arise from this sacred union.

The Wisdom of God, which was "set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was," declared of old "By me kings reign." Under the influence of the same Divine Wisdom, St. Paul inculcates subjection to the higher Powers, because "the Powers that be, are ordained of God;" because "the Ruler is the Minister of God. *Rom. XIII.* But the Wisdom of our reforming Philosophers teaches us that "the King is the Creature and the Servant of the People, their Minister to execute their pleasure, accountable to them, subject to their controul, and liable to be removed at their sovereign will;" nay that even the laws themselves cannot stand before this self-ordained power, that they are enacted by the People, and to be rescinded at their pleasure. Thus have they taken counsel together

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gether against the Lord and against the King, and in their vain imagination devised a more perfect system of Civil Polity in (N. 1.) the Rights of Man; by which liberal Code treason, rebellion, sacrilege, plunder, and the most horrid murders are sanctified. We lose indeed our Religion, our King, the protection of the Laws, and the good order of civil society: as a compensation we acquire a Philosophy which Common Sense disavows, an establishment of the Natural Rights and Equality of men which Nature never knew, and the Supremacy of the People which must end, as it began, in confusion, misrule, and every evil work.

But it is not in such schools, nor from such teachers, that we are to learn our duty. If we would check the progress of these licentious and desolating principles, if we have a wish to secure our civil Government on its proper and solid basis, let us unite
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with fervent zeal to recall Religion, enforce its
sanctions, and assert its authority over our lives and
actions.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" it is the foundation of all Religion. Our own nature, and the constitution of things around us, impress this reverential awe deep on our minds. We know, we feel ourselves to be created and dependent Beings: hence we acknowledge an almighty Creator and supreme Governour. All the works of this stupendous system, of which Man is a part, are formed with the most consummate order; the same great law of harmony holds its force in the moral world; we see that every perversion of the natural order of things is attended with natural evil; and we feel that every deviation from the moral law of order is productive of moral evil and its pernicious effects both on societies and individuals;

hence

hence our idea of God's Moral Government. Our Conscience, that moral feeling of the human heart, assures us that we must be accountable to the Author of our Being for every violation of his laws; and our natural sense of justice is a severe monitor to us that every act of disobedience will be recompensed with a proportionate punishment. So that it is not only becoming such a creature as man, but it is the law of his nature to "fear the Lord his God, to walk in all his ways, and to keep the commandments of the Lord;" for "by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil;" *Prov. xvi. 6.* Knowing this, that "the Lord our God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God and a terrible." *Deut. x. 12—17.* "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy holy name; for thou only art holy!" *Rev. xv. 3.*

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The same divine authority, which commands this first great duty, gives its sanction to the second precept, and enforces the honour due to the King; the one supports Religion in its truth and purity, the other secures Civil Government in equity and peace. This is the appointment of our gracious Creator, who intended that Man should be as happy as his situation in this world, and his own conduct, will permit, and therefore formed him with a disposition to society, and with powers and affections to enjoy the blessings of it; in consequence of this, whatever Powers are necessary to maintain the good order of this social state, they are the "Ordinance of God;" so near is the relation between these two duties, to fear God, and to honour the King. Thus St. Paul declares himself expressly and decidedly, "There is no Power, but of God: whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God. The Ruler is the Minister of God to thee for good. He is also the Minister of God, a Re-

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venger

venger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil ; for he beareth not the sword in vain." Subjection therefore is urged upon us not only through fear of the avenging sword, but also from a conscientious sense of duty.

The Ministers of the Gospel of Christ can receive their instructions only from the Gospel, from the commands and example of their blessed Lord and his holy Apostles ; these uniformly enjoin obedience to the Supreme Magistrate ; we dare not teach any other doctrine ; we dare not be false to our heavenly Master : should the servants of the Prince of Peace, in a pretended discharge of our office, attempt to enflame the minds of men, and rouse them to discord and sedition, all good men would turn from us with abhorrence as traitors to our country, rebels to our King, and apostates from our God. But let us not, because we exhort every soul to be subject to the higher Powers, let us not
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on this account be calumniated as blind and servile assertors of I know not ^{what} indefeasible divine right in Kings to govern wrong: we are taught, and we teach, to "render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour:" at the same time we know, we feel, that we are members of the community, we claim the rights of citizens, and we have the cause of civil liberty warm at our hearts: we have two Masters, God and the King; happy in this, that the service of both is perfect freedom, for "where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" religious and civil.

Liberty is essential to happiness; happiness is the offspring of society; society is supported by law: therefore all laws, which are founded on equity, and have the welfare of mankind for their end, though framed by human prudence, are emanations from the Wisdom of God, and ratified by his authority.

authority. "The Laws of every civil community are the conditions of peace among its members."

Dr. Balguy. The laws of this kingdom have vested the executive power of the state in the King; and, to enable him to discharge this high office, have armed him with the whole force of the community; (2) they give him dignity, supremacy, and majesty; they annex inviolability to his person; they declare him the arbiter of peace and war, the source of justice and judgment, and the fountain of honour. This is an important, an awful, a sacred trust; but it is a trust for the public good: the same laws, which give this high authority to the King, have not only prescribed its bounds, beyond which it cannot pass, but they have directed the exertion of it solely to the protection, the happiness, and the honour of the community. (3) "What power the King hath, he hath it by the laws;" *Hooker.* therefore he can have no power against the laws; hence the political axiom, "The King can do no wrong;"

wrong;" for, as King, "he can do nothing but what he can do by the law;" (4) should he command any act in violation of the laws, the command would be a mere nullity; and the person, who should execute such mandate, would be amenable to the laws, and punishable by them, that is, by that very Power, against whom his own command is no justification or protection. That the royal power may never be abused to any act of injustice, oppression, or tyranny, by the law and antient usage of this realm, the King, before the imperial crown is placed upon his head, is required publickly to take a solemn oath "that he will govern the people of this kingdom according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the laws and customs of the same: that he will to his power cause law and justice in mercy to be executed in all his judgments: and that he will to the utmost of his power maintain the laws of God, and the true profession of the Gospel,

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and

and the protestant reformed Religion established by law."

(5) The requisition of this oath seems to have been a fundamental principle in the civil polity of this kingdom from the earliest ages, of which we have any authentic records, down^{to} the present times.

(6) Our ancestors were not "enveloped in darkness and ignorance;" liberty shone upon them in its full splendor; and if any of their Kings attempted to overstep the bounds of his legitimate authority, their high spirit immediately took fire, they knew how to assert their rights, and repel the inroad; their wisdom and valour wrested from oppressive Kings many restricting Laws and Charters of Rights, as the occasions required: these are the foundation of those statutes, which fix the bounds of the regal power, and are the glory as well as the security of the present, we hope too of future ages.

ages. (7) Nor is this limitation to be considered as a diminution of the power of the King; it rather gives dignity, life, and vigour to it. To the Sovereign is given the power of doing whatever is right; hence the divine command of submission to his authority, for all such power is from God, who is the fountain of goodness: but the power of doing ill is from the kingdom of darkness, and, like darkness, is rather a privation than an active energy.

The Preacher, however averse to political discussions in this place, which ought to be sacred to the great offices of morality and the divine truths of religion, hopes to be excused for holding out the Laws of God in one hand, and the Statutes of the Realm in the other, and from both enforcing the duty of obedience to the Sovereign, as those declare him *to be*, and these cautiously provide that he *shall be* "the Minister of God to us for good."

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*To be expunged
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But further than a view of these constitutional obligations to the just execution of the laws, the spirit of the times, and the awful solemnity of this day may perhaps justify a brief consideration of the wisdom and equity with which the laws themselves are framed.

To this audience more is not necessary than barely to mention the constituent parts of the legislative power; it is not necessary here to define their separate rights; suffice it to observe that one of these parts consists of the Representatives of the People, men of liberal education and large property, taken from the mass of the community, entrusted with a share of this high power for a limited time, and after that time to return again to the private station. Next to these stand the Nobility of the Realm, (8) an august assembly of hereditary Counsellors of the Crown and Protectors of the People; this illustrious order "creates and preserves
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that gradual scale of dignity, which rises from the peasant to the prince, and gives stability to government." The Sovereign, who in his political and regal capacity is a Corporation Sole, forms the first Estate, gives life to the other parts, and puts them in motion. "In these three branches the legislative power, and (of course) the supreme and absolute authority of the State is vested by the Constitution." *Blackstone.*

To the wisdom and integrity of the Representatives of the people, to the unblemished honour of the Nobility, and to the Majesty of the King, the community with confidence entrusts its rights; secure that from the identity of interests between the whole legislative power and the body of the people no proposal can obtain the requisite consent of the three constituent parts, that is, no law can ever be enacted, which is not common to, and equally binding upon every member of the community; (9)

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neither

neither prince nor peer can arrogate to himself immunity or exemption from the laws, whose protection is equally extended to the peasant; the meanest cottager, as to his person and property, is equally secured in his humble hut, as the great baron in his lordly hall; every man's house is his castle, and the laws are its defenders. This is Civil Liberty; not a sickly exotic reared in the hot-bed of sedition, but like our oak, a native of our island, rooted in its soil, raised to its magnificent growth by the genial air of the climate, and preserved in everlasting vigour by our free constitution.

O my Country, let me hail thee as the birth-place of heroes, the school of sages, the bulwark of the pure reformed religion, the seat of commerce, the impregnable fortress of liberty, the admiration and envy of mankind! Happy are thy sons, if they would know their happiness! They do know it: their unanimity and manly exertions in
defence

defence of their Sovereign and the Constitution show that they are sensible of the blessings they enjoy, and that they are worthy of them. I look upon my Countrymen with respect and love: I glory in my Country: I bless my God that I was born an *Englishman*.

The publick spirit is now roused to defend these blessings, and the publick faith is engaged to protect our Allies against the insidious artifices and hostile attacks of atheistical, ferocious, and sanguinary ruffians, who have violated every law human and divine, and declared war against all mankind;

“Havoc, and spoil, and ruin are their gain.”

But happily “the glory of heroism and the splendor of conquest” are at present clouded by defeat; and the “scientific principle” which hath been held out as the “Polar Star, by which the vessel of the state was to be guided in a bolder navigation
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to discover in unexplored regions, the treasures of public felicity," is found to be a meteor, whose baleful glare has led these wretched Pilots to dash it against a rock in a tempestuous sea, where it must inevitably perish, unless the power of the Almighty God delivers it from the danger. We hope that the deeds of oppression, devastation, and horror, which disgrace the present age, and which history cannot record without a tear, are imputable only to a faction of savages; and that the great body of the people have looked upon them with abhorrence; we hope that there is yet religion and goodness enough in the nation to recommend it to the mercy and favour of God; and in this hope we pray for the re-establishment of their peace under a free and equal government, which may have the wisdom to revive the spirit of religion among them, and the power to secure to them rational liberty and solid happiness.

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How near this desired event may be, or what other atrocious deeds are destined to fill up the measure of their guilt, we must leave to the disposal of the Almighty; for when the Lord ariseth to shake terribly the earth, whether it be by pestilence, by earthquakes, by storm and tempest, or by the sword and the fierceness of man, we know that these are delegated by an offended God to execute his vengeance; but how far the commission to destroy extends, we cannot know; our duty is to stand in awe before the Almighty, to deprecate his wrath, and implore his gracious protection.

And may the dreadful scenes among that infatuated people be an admonition to us, that we endeavour to preserve our happy Constitution sacred and inviolable. We know the conditions: if we fear God and honour the King, we may with a well-grounded confidence, hope that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be

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established

established among us for all generations. These, and all other blessings, for them, for us, and all that fear thee, O God, we humbly beg in the name and mediation of Jesus Christ our most blessed Lord and Saviour,

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NOTES.

(N. 1.)

MUCH has been said about the Rights of Man and the Natural Equality of Men, with little reasoning indeed and less precision, but with much hardy assertion and inflammatory declamation. Would those, who endeavour to propagate this doctrine, abate a little of their virulent and abusive language, it would be pleasant enough to hear them talk. After descanting in many uncourtly terms against the authority of an hundred or a thousand years, "they proceed on to the time when Man came from the hands of his Maker. What was he then? —Man—Man was his high and only title. We are now (say they) got at the origin of Man, and at the origin of his Rights."—But Man, as he came from the hands of his Maker, was a solitary being; in that state what rights could he claim, and from whom? We soon find him a husband and a father; here his rights began, that is, in his social state, and encreased as men multiplied on the face of the earth. The
first

first man was created in the full vigour of manhood; the first man, that was born of woman, was born an infant, as were all succeeding generations: this alone shows that the natural equality of men is a chimæra which never did, never could possibly exist. Enquiries into the origin of civil government are rather curious than useful; but the fact cannot be "that the individuals themselves, each in his own personal and sovereign right, entered into compact with each other to produce a government." Government implies law; law is a rule of civil action prescribed by some superior, but where each individual has a sovereign right, there can be no superior. That a people of Sovereigns should unite to raise a Sovereign, under whom each individual retains his Sovereignty even over his Sovereign—this is such a complicated absurdity, that common sense blushes at the supposition; of its effects, where an attempt is made to put it in practice, a neighbouring nation gives us terrible instances.

(2)

If this be a scriptural, a legal, a constitutional representation of the high office and sacred character of the Sovereign, can we hear, without abhorrent indignation, the disrespectful and degrading terms with which our metaphysical politicians contaminate their theology? To speak of him as "no more than the first servant of the public, created by it, maintained by it, and responsible to it," does not become a good christian, or a good citizen; it is little less, if less, than treason; at least "it is not seemly for servants to have rule over princes."

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But this irreverence is still aggravated by a scurrilous buffoonery, which delights in making villainous jests on his office and person : this malignity could be found only in the lowest and meanest of mankind, and would be truly despicable, but that the black creeping viper is too noxious an animal to be despised. Tully has well delineated such a wretch, “ *Hominem sine re, sine fide, sine spe, sine sede, sine fortunis, ore, linguâ, manu, vitâ omni inquinatum.*”

(3)

Our antient laws are exprefs and decisive on this point. *Nihil potest Rex quam quod de jure potest*, says Bracton; attribuat igitur Rex legi quod lex attribuit ei, viz. dominationem et potestatem, non est enim Rex ubi dominatur voluntas et non lex. So Fortescue, Non potest Rex Angliæ ad libitum suum leges mutare regni sui, principatu namque nedum regali, sed et politico, ipse suo populo dominatur. Hence the sacredness or inviolability of his person, each term has the same meaning, and signifies “ that no jurisdiction upon earth has power to try him in a criminal way ; much less to condemn him to death.” Bracton assigns a reason, *Sunt etiam sub rege liberi homines, et servi ejus potestati subiecti, et omnis quidem sub eo, et ipse sub nullo, nisi tantum sub Deo. Parem autem non habet in regno suo, quia sic amitteret preceptum, cum par in parem non habet imperium. Item nec, multo fortius, superiorem nec potentiorum habere debet, quia sic esset inferior sibi subiectis, et inferiores pares esse non possunt potentioribus.*

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Ipse

Ipse autem rex non debet esse sub homine, sed sub deo et sub lege, quia lex facit regem. Lib. 1. cap. 8. The learned and benevolent asserter of the Laws of Nature argues in the same manner, but more forcibly: he deserves attention. Vid. Cumberland de legg. Naturæ. Confectaria, VII. Blackstone observes that "if any foreign jurisdiction had this power, as was formerly claimed by the Pope, the independence of the kingdom would be no more: and if such a power were vested in any domestic tribunal, there would soon be an end of the constitution, by destroying the free agency of one of the constituent parts of the sovereign legislative power." This remark shows deep thought and solid judgment: it leads us to reflect that inviolability is annexed also to the other branches of the legislature considered in their political capacity: it leads us further to reflect that the violation of the rights of one branch tends to the destruction of the whole. We know that about the middle of the last century, soon after the murder of the King, the Commons voted the House of Lords to be useless and dangerous; they were divested of their rights. Not long after, the sole existing branch, the representatives of the people, sunk beneath the insolent tyrant of their free commonwealth, who entered their House with a File of Musqueteers, drove them out, took away their Speaker's Mace, and locked the door.

(4)

To secure the impartial administration of justice, even against the command of the King to the contrary, our Laws from old times required an oath from each of the Judges of the King's Courts at their first appointment to their office, *Justiciarius iste inter cætera sic jurabit, "se justitiam ministraturum omnibus hominibus coram eo placentibus, inimicis et amicis, nec sic facere differet, etiamsi Rex per literas suas, aut ore tenus, contrarium jusserit."* Fortescue: The reader perhaps may not be displeased to see this part of the Judge's oath required by Stat. 4. 18 Edw. III. A. D. 1344. *Vous jurez qe vous ne declarez a nully come droit per lettres du Roi ne de nully autre ne per autre cause queconque.*

This appeal to our antient laws shows that our ancestors guarded their rights with a watchful and jealous care against all invasions of them, and transmitted them down to us sacred and inviolable. The spirit of our laws and the genius of our constitution have for ages supported these claims of Free Men. The Revolution in the year 1688 did not give birth to this spirit, but arose from it, and from it received its sanction: the associations therefore to celebrate that great event, and the engagements to act upon revolution-principles, are liable to the charge of futility; it were to be wished that no word of a blacker import could with justice be added: A Government founded upon revolution—

volution-principles is a solecism in politics; for every revolution is a dissolution of government, as far as it goes. What should we think of a marriage-settlement founded upon principles provisory of a divorce? A case, we know, may possibly happen which would justify a divorce by the laws of God and Man; but the supposition of such a case in the articles of agreement would be an unpardonable affront to the contracting parties: so in government, to put cases of extreme necessity, which have no real existence, and to argue from them, is indelicate, is insolent, is malignant.

This appeal shows also the high respect which is due, and which every wise and good man will pay to our antient Lawyers; some of whom drew up, and others of them digested and recorded those laws, which are to this day the glory of Englishmen. That man must have a forehead bomb-proof, who is hardy enough to assert that "So little is plain sense heard in the mysterious nonsense which is the cloak of political fraud, that the Cokes, and the Blackstones, and the Burkes, speak as if our right to freedom depended on its possession by our ancestors." This, to adopt for once the language of his associate Thomas Paine, is "a sort of mule animal capable only of destroying," we may add, engendered by malice upon ignorance. Mr. Burke speaks for himself. Sir Edward Coke and Sir William Blackstone were Justices of the King's Courts; ill would it have become them to have been descanting on natural rights; their duty called upon them to decide according to the laws in being; in cases of common law, the lex
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non scripta, which is founded on general or particular customs, they could not deviate from antient usage, precedents, and rules. "The statute law is a rule of civil conduct commanding what is right, and prohibiting what is wrong; therefore the primary and principal objects of the law are (civil) Rights and Wrongs." The Common Law is the legitimate offspring of Common Sense, the *judicia communibus hominum sensibus infixæ*; the Statute Law is the Wisdom of the whole legislative power, *lex scripta*, from the letter of which the Judge will not, without good reason, deviate. If the learned student would employ his time in reading, and his faculties in understanding those volumes of which he speaks so contemptuously, he would find them a rich treasury of profound science and liberal sentiment, which might possibly induce him to recal his wanton censure; he would find the Institutes and the Commentaries of these venerable Sages to be repositories and elucidations of those Laws, which secure the life, the liberty, the property, the political welfare and the domestic happiness of every individual of the community.

(5)

+ The Laws of Edward the Confessor, which are supposed to be a digest of the Laws of Alfred, required this oath. The Chapter de Regis Officio, &c. is too long to be transcribed here, and too excellent to be given in a mutilated state. Vid. *Leges Edoardi inter leges Anglo-Saxon: per Wilkins*. The haughty Norman in all the pride of conquest

submitted to take this oath, and confirmed the Laws of Edward by Charter, from which even his own Barons soon caught the sacred flame of Liberty. It is not to be expected that this should always have shined with equal lustre; the circumstances of some particular times, and the long civil wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster were as clouds obscuring the sun; the artful and rapacious government of Henry VII. and the insolent and impetuous tyranny of Henry VIII. were indeed very oppressive, but, though not intentionally yet in the event, very favourable to liberty, as the one removed the yoke of the feudal system, and the other delivered the nation from its degrading subjection to the Papal See. The splendid despotism of a Maiden Queen diminished its light, but could not extinguish its fire; it recovered its force under James I. and in the reign of his unhappy son burst out into a terrible conflagration; as that subsided, it settled into a genial flame, and has purged away every stain of tyrannic power,

Donec longa dies, perfectio temporis orbe,

Concretam exemit labem, purumque reliquit

Ætherium sensum, atque auræ simplicis ignem. —ÆNEID. VI.

(6)

From the manner in which these metaphysical politicians speak of our Ancestors, one would think they were a Horde of Orang-Outangs that had just scratched and cudgelled each other into good manners, but wanted the new scientific principle to rationalize, and organize, and fraternize

ternize them. We think very differently. Common sense has been the equal gift of God to mankind in all ages. The sun shined as bright four thousand years ago as it does at this day; and, unhappily for the credit of these illuminated and illuminating philosophers, there is nothing new under the sun. Catiline *made as fine a speech* among his banditti of cut-throats against the corruptions of government and the insolence of wealth, and in favour of the natural rights and equality of men, as was ever spouted in the Jacobin Club or Revolution-Society. Munster yet remembers John of Leyden, and his associate, chieftain, and hangman Cniperdoling, at the head of their rabble of levellers. The Tree of Liberty is a scion from Kett's Oak of Reformation. Cade and Tyler were guided by the same polarity to seek for treasures in the ocean of equalization; and John Ball, Tyler's graceless chaplain, was a ribald as profoundly versed in the black art of sedition, as any of his ribald successors in the present times: All these professed to enlighten, and promised to elevate; but their light, like the flames of the infernal lake, served only to render darkness visible; and their elevation never rose higher than in arborem infelicem suspendi.

(7)

✕ Potestas, quâ eorum (regum) alter perperam agere liber est, libertate hujusmodi non augetur, ut posse languescere morive Potentia non est, sed propter privationes in adjecto Impotentia Potius denominandum.—Fortescue.

(8) "The

“ The distinction of rank and honours is necessary in every well-governed state: in order to reward such as are eminent for their services to the public, in a manner the most desirable to individuals, and yet without burden to the community; exciting thereby an ambitious yet laudable ardor, and generous emulation, in others. And emulation, or virtuous ambition, is a spring of action which, however dangerous or invidious in a mere republic or under a despotic sway, will certainly be attended with good effects under a free monarchy; where, without destroying its existence, its excesses may be continually restrained by that superior power, from which all honour is derived. Such a spirit, when nationally diffused, gives life and vigour to the community; it sets all the wheels of government in motion, which, under a wise regulator, may be directed to any beneficial purpose; and thereby every individual may be made subservient to the public good, while he principally means to promote his own particular views. A body of nobility is also more peculiarly necessary in our mixed and compounded constitution, in order to support the rights of both the crown and the people, by forming a barrier to withstand the encroachments of both. It creates and preserves that gradual scale of dignity, which proceeds from the peasant to the prince; rising like a pyramid from a broad foundation, and diminishing to a point as it rises. It is this ascending and contracting proportion that adds stability to any government;

vernment; for when the departure is sudden from one extreme to another, we may pronounce that state to be precarious. The nobility therefore are the pillars, which are reared from among the people, more immediately to support the throne; and, if that falls, they must also be buried under its ruins. Accordingly, when in the last century the commons had determined to extirpate monarchy, they also voted the house of lords to be useless and dangerous. And since titles of nobility are thus expedient in the state, it is also expedient that their owners should form an independent and separate branch of the legislature. If they were confounded with the mass of the people, and like them had only a vote in electing representatives, their privileges would soon be borne down and overwhelmed by the popular torrent, which would effectually level all distinctions. It is therefore highly necessary that the body of nobles should have a distinct assembly, distinct deliberations, and distinct powers from the commons."—Blackstone's Commentaries, Book 1. Ch. 2.

(9)

Hoc est Institutum Seculare, quod ut observetur volo, et hoc est, Volo ut quilibet homo jure communi sit dignus, five pauper, five dives, et ei justum judicium judicetur.—Prima Legg. politic. Eadgari.

In magnam Cartam, Cap. xxxviii, Salvæ sint, &c. Sir Edward Coke says, it is principally to be observed, that here is not any saving

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at all for the King, his heirs, or successors, to the end that the King, his heirs, and successors, against all pretences of evasions, should be bound by all the branches of both these Charters.

The second is, that all the Customs, and Liberties, which the King had granted to be holden within his Realm, for him and his heirs, the King himself and his heirs, as much as appertained to him or them, should observe and keep.

The third is, that all the men of this Realm, as well of the Clergy as of the Laity, the said Customs and Liberties for themselves and their heirs, as much as to them appertained, should observe and keep.

This is the chief felicity of a kingdom, when good Laws are reciprocally of Prince and people (as is here undertaken) duly observed.

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FINIS.